

## **Marriage, its process and preparedness among Youth: Insight from Youth in India**

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**ABSTRACT:** -It is evident that rapid global changes have impact on the institution of marriage all over the world, India is not segregated from these changes. However, traditional values norms are still playing significantly in marriage process, such as marriage age, process of mate selection, dowry, etc. Youth in India study, a sub nationally representative survey, help us to explore this dimension minutely. Results reveal that arrange marriage prevails irrespective of states, however some independence in the choice of groom or bride is observed in Tamil Nadu. Largely youth in northern states are not aware about their would-be spouse before marriage, which is not the case for southern states. The chances of knowing spouse before marriage is significantly more, if the age at marriage is above the legal age. Men and women living in non-nuclear family and in rural areas are less likely to interact with their spouse before marriage.

**Key words:** Marriage, Youth, Preparedness, legal marriage age, Dowry, Non-Nuclear Family

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### **I. BACKGROUND**

Marriage is the core of family life, and in every societies, there are some norms and customs relating to the marriage, including desirable age and the way in which spouse is selected depends on society's view and the family- its role, structure, pattern of life and the individuals and collective responsibilities of its members. Many of these practices and custom are so thoroughly rooted that they are generally not even perceived rationally, but are followed blindly, for example, in recent past in Indian society a custom was quite prevalent particularly in Hindu society that, a girl should be married off before she entered her puberty because social system usually demand that reproduction should take place within wedlock. Manyscholars advocated that, timing of marriage influences a wide variety of other experiences, ranging from childbearing to educational attainment to divorce [1.2.3]. The reduction in fertility and mortality, especially infant and maternal mortality, is attributed to increase in age at marriage, and reduction in child marriages are a result of longer stay of female in educational institution and their involvement in paid economic activities is a well-established fact. But still, early marriage is extremely common in India and is associated with a wide variety of marital and reproductive outcomes [4]. There have been several studies in past and present in Indian setting which have focuses that, in India, the family is mainly patriarchal, patrilocal, and patrilineal and probably this is one of the reasons for in egalitarian gender relation [5, 6].

Although, research has yet to be fully established that, there is casual link between their autonomy in marriage related decision making and its impact on later marital life which could enhance gender related equitable relationship and ultimately marital satisfaction. Probably after the birth, the next important milestone in the life of a person is his or her marriage [7]. Not even in India throughout the world, marriage is regarded as a moment of celebration and a mile stone in adult life. Sadly, practice of early marriage gives no such reason for celebration. Perhaps marriage is a key component of transition into adulthood, and also a key ingredient of a successful transition to adulthood is the extent of involvement of the youth in the marriage process or extent to which they exercise their right to choose a spouse and to enter marriage with "free and full consent" (CEDAW). More over girls and boys barely meet there would be spouse before marriage resulting in marriage of two strangers [8].

Though, what is available on marital process, in Indian context, is mainly on marital age, consequences of early marriage such as early pregnancy and child birth, dowry and violence within marriage [9]. But recent evidence points to fact that, of late more girls and boys are being involved [10]. But still very little is known about the extent to which young people themselves are involved in the decision making process and if they are, whether they play an active role or not. Although rapid global changes including urbanization, migration, increasing educational opportunities, and socio-economic changes have led impact on institution of marriage and India is not segregated from these changes.

In view of the foregoing discussion, this paper is an endeavour to have microscopic look at the marriage process in India and its different dimensions of transition to marriage and marriage preparedness among young men and

women in India. The areas explored are: young people's preference regarding timing and type of marriage, marriage planning and extent of youth involvement, age at marriage, dowry, and possible determinant of interaction before marriage among married male and women.

## II. DATA AND METHODS

Data for this study is taken from "The Youth in India: Situation and Needs" which was conducted during 2006-2007, the survey is an outcome of collaborative efforts of International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) [11] Mumbai and Population Council, New Delhi. This sub-nationally representative survey cover six states of India, representing different socio-cultural and geographic setting, namely—Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and TamilNadu. The survey specifically interviewed 8052 married young men in the age group 15-29 (because of the paucity of married men in younger than 20 this age group was extended), 11522 unmarried young men in the age group 15-24, 13912 married young women and 17362 unmarried young women in the age group 15-24.

In this survey rural and urban areas were treated as independent sampling domain, and a multistage stratified sampling design were adopted to obtain the primary sampling units independently for each. In order to avoid potential risk in interviewing both men and women from the same PSU, interviews were conducted in separate primary sampling unit for male and female respondent. In each PSU, household to be interviewed were selected by systematic sampling. Within each selected household no more than one respondent was interviewed from one category. In case more than one respondent from a single category was found in the same household, one respondent was selected randomly and no replacement was allowed. Data presented in this study are restricted to married young men aged 15-29 and married young women in the age group of 15-24. A total of 8052 young men and 13912 married young women from these six states constitutes our sample.

The study covers the inclusive information on the young's people life such as education, work and employment, agency and gender role attitude, awareness on sexual and reproductive health, premarital sexual relationship and transition to marriage and married life, substance abuse, mental health disorder. For the aforementioned objective of the study, bi-variate and multivariate techniques have been utilized. To understand the agreement between preferred and actual age at marriage of youth, Kappa index have been used.

In order to understand marriage practice and preparedness following domains are included in this study: youth involvement in marriage and its timing, age at marriage, type of marriage, payment of dowry, and acquaintance with spouse before marriage. The youth were asked about acquaintance with spouse before marriage i.e. *how well did you know your wife before marriage? Did you ever have a chance to talk/meet the girl your parents/guardian has chosen to be your wife alone before marriage? Did your parents ask you about when you wanted to get married? Is the wife of yours choice or parent's/guardian choice? Was your marriage arrange or love?* On marriage process the youth were asked about preferred age at marriage, intending to marry someone of their choice and parent's reactions about him or her after respondents informed them, meeting or interacting with spouse before marriage, their feelings about their marriage. The question related to payment of dowry was asked which includes whether the respondent has brought or received any *cash, gift, jewellery and or other items at time of marriage.*

## III. RESULTS

### 3.1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE MARRIED YOUTH IN INDIA

TABLE1: Presents the percentage distribution of both men and women respondents by their various background characteristics. In all states highest percentage of men respondents belonged to 25-29 years of age group where as women respondents belonged to 20-24 years of age group. In Tamil Nadu, 81 percent of men respondent belongs to the age group 25-29 followed by 69 percent in Andhra Pradesh, 68 percent in Maharashtra and the lowest 53 percent in Rajasthan. Similarly in Tamil Nadu highest percentage (84%) of women respondents are in age group 20-24 years and it is lowest in Bihar. Majority of respondents (both men and women) hailed from rural areas with highest percentage in Bihar. About 30 percent of men respondents in Rajasthan belonged to fifth wealth quintile, whereas only 5 percent of male respondents in Bihar belonged to same quintile. Both in Bihar and Jharkhand 46.5 percent of men respondents belonged to first quintile followed by Maharashtra to 5 percent in the same quintile from Andhra Pradesh. However in case of women respondents, around 23 percent of respondents belonged to fifth quintile in states like Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu whereas lowest (7%) of women respondents in Bihar belonged to same quintile. Largest chunk of both men and women respondents adore to Hinduism with highest of 93 percent men in Rajasthan and 89 percent women in Tamil Nadu. However 16 percent of Muslim men respondents belonged to Jharkhand which reduces to 12 and 11 percent in Bihar and Maharashtra respectively and becomes lowest in Tamil Nadu with six percent. In case of Muslim women respondent Jharkhand had the highest proportion followed by Bihar while the lowest is observed in Tamil Nadu. States like Rajasthan and Bihar had no single respondent having affiliation with Christianity. Majority of respondents in all states belonged to Other Backward Classes (OBCs) with 72 percent

men and 70 percent women in Tamil Nadu. Again Highest proportion respondents belonging to Schedule Castes (SCs) hailed from Tamil Nadu. In all states, except Bihar majority of men respondents had attended 8-11 years of the schooling with highest 43 percent in Maharashtra followed by 38 percent in Tamil Nadu followed to the lowest of 30 percent in Bihar. In case of 12 and more years of schooling, 19.6 percent of men respondents belonged to Maharashtra followed by almost same proportion of around 19.4 percent in Rajasthan. Only 5.9 percent of men respondents in Tamil Nadu had no formal schooling, elevating up to highest 29.5 percent in Bihar. In case of women respondents like men majority of women in states like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra had highest education up to 8-11 years of schooling. But in states like Jharkhand, Rajasthan and Bihar majority of women respondents had 1-7 years of schooling with highest 26.3 percent in Rajasthan and lowest 20.5 percent in Bihar. Similarly these three states had highest proportion of women without formal education with 64 percent illiterate in Bihar. Majority of the respondents lived in joint family with highest 77.8 percent of men and 76.1 percent of women in Maharashtra.

### **3.2. MARRIAGE PROCESS**

In this section, we are trying to explore the process of marriage planning as well as their involvement in it. Like parents ever had sought their opinion about timing of marriage and at which age yours parent going ahead chat related to your marriage, respondent were asked that, *did your parent ask you about when you wanted to get married, and when your parent/guardian had first started discussion about your marriage how old were you?*. Response like *don't know, very early marriage parent never discussed* were categorised as others in this study. Fig.1. Depict that young married men are more likely than young women to be consulted on the timing of marriage (46% versus 20%). Wide regional disparity were also observed, for example, youth from Tamil Nadu followed by Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra (76%, 66%, 60% respectively) are more responding that, their parents sought opinion about timing of marriage than Rajasthan, Bihar and Jharkhand (16%, 20% and 31% respectively), but with regards to married women it is lowest in Bihar i.e. 3% and highest in Tamil Nadu 56%. Finding underscore the, Overwhelming majority of married male (table 2) from Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, (91%, 89%, and 86% respectively) adhere that, first initiation started in the age group of 18 and above, and corresponding figure for Jharkhand, Bihar and Rajasthan is (63%, 61% and 52% respectively). Sizeable proportion of married men, from states like (Rajasthan 30%, Bihar, 25% and Jharkhand and 24 %.), reported that, their parents starts initiation during teenage years and these states also marks the considerable proportion of others like early marriage don't know etc. For married women, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra (49%, 34%) focuses on beginning of marriage talk by their guardian, started at the age of 18 or above which is the established age for adulthood, but vast majority of married women from Bihar, Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan reported that marriage related discussion were initiated at age 17 or below. Findings also reiterate the vast gender differences in age of young people when discussions were initiated by their parents.

#### **3.2.1 PRACTICE OF DOWRY**

According to a country wide survey conducted by the All India Democratic Women Association (AIDWA) in 2001, the dowry system has become a pan Indian phenomenon, permeating 'every section, class, caste and religion and even the more egalitarian tribal communities, particularly during the past one and half decade [12]. Based on a study in rural South India, finding shows that the expectations of a large dowry payment top the list for cause of the undesirability of daughters,[13]. Despite the widely acknowledged problem associated with dowry, in this paper our effort is to know the practice of dowry among married men and women and possible socio-economic determinant associated with this. Finding indicates that dowry is universal phenomenon in all the sates, 72 percent of young men reported receiving dowry and 78 percent young women reported giving it. TABLE-3 portray socio-economic differentials of men aged 15-29 and women aged 15-24 who reported receiving or giving of dowry. Among married men 73 percent from urban and 71 percent from rural areas reported of receiving or giving dowry whereas among women 81 percent from urban and 76 percent from rural areas reported the same practice. In both the group (men and women) practice of dowry is increasing with increasing age. Practice of dowry is reported lowest in other religious groups by both married men and women. For men it is highest in Christians and both Hindu and Muslims men reported almost equal of such practice. However for women, highest percentage of Muslim followed by Christian women admitted giving dowry

Practice of dowry is reportedly highest among higher caste groups of both married men and married women. Practice of dowry also increases with increasing educational level and wealth quintile of both men and women. Result also depicts state wise differential in dowry practice for both men and women. Practice of dowry is highest among both men and women in the state of Tamil Nadu while it is lowest in Maharashtra

#### **3.2.2. MARRIAGE PREPAREDNESS, TYPE OF MARRIAGE, ACQUAINTANCE WITH SPOUSE BEFORE MARRIAGE**

Table: 4 depicts the percentage distribution of respondents by their marriage related attributes. In general, arrange marriage is the most favoured form of marriage in all the states. It is universal in the states of Rajasthan (100% among both men and women), while extent of arrange marriage is lowest in the state of Tamil Nadu (80% among men and 81% among women). Love marriages is maximum in Tamil Nadu, interaction with spouse before marriage is also highest in this state with only 21 percent and 35 percent men and women respectively reporting no interaction with spouse before wedding followed by Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Men respondent were more exited regarding their marriage in all the states as against their counterparts. However women respondent in all the states reported more unhappiness or scared felling in all the states with highest proportion in Bihar. In Tamil Nadu both 33 percent men and 24 percent women reported to have someone in their mind prior to their marriage. Similarly men and women in Tamil Nadu felt more comfortable in sharing about their wish to marry someone to their parents. In terms of parental consent to women's choice 68 percent of parents in Jharkhand rejected their daughter's choice, where as it was approved by 40 percent in Rajasthan. For men 56 percent of parents in Maharashtra agreed to their ward's choice as against 36 percent in Bihar.

### **3.2.3. AWARENESS ABOUT LEGAL AGE AT MARRIAGE FOR BOYS AND GIRLS AMONG MARRIED YOUTH**

In India marriage is not only a concern between two individuals but it is establishment of relationship between two families, bride and groom act as a connecting link between two families. Generally in arrange marriages, parents of the groom and bride, taking into the account the family status, economic position, caste, religion, region knowledge of the provision of any legislative Act alone will not be able to decide when boys and girls should not marry [14]. Further, when there is legal age at marriage is decided by the authority, and then the first step in the direction of implementation is to let every family know about it. In this context it is worth knowing that the extent of knowledge of young men and women about the correct knowledge of the age at marriage for boys and girls. In response to the question, *what is the legal age at marriage for boys and girl in India?* Fig.5 depicts the awareness about legal age at marriage for boys and girls among married youth. It is interesting to note that though higher proportion of married men of Rajasthan, Bihar and Jharkhand know about legal age at marriage for boys, but on the other hand these states marks the lowest mean age at marriage for men (19.5, 19.7 and 20 years respectively). Married men and women of Andhra Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu are less aware about the same though all these states know well about girl's legal age at marriage. Contrary to this in Bihar, Jharkhand and Rajasthan mean age at marriage for married women is low among the other states (15.1, 16.1 and 17 years respectively).

### **3.2.4. AGE AT MARRIAGE**

Table 4 represents age at marriage of both men and women in all the six states. It is clearly evident that most of the married men of Andhra Pradesh (63.7%) followed by Maharashtra (58.2%) got married in 20-24 years of age where as majority of women respondents with highest two-thirds in Rajasthan to lowest 62.7 percent in Bihar tied the nuptial bond in 15-19 years of age in all the states. A significant proportion of women in Bihar followed by 25.4 percent in Jharkhand got married below 15 years of age. Except Tamil Nadu where 33.6 percent of women got married in 20-24 years of age, in all other states very few percentage of women got married in the same age group. Men respondents getting married below 15 years are not favoured in all states. In Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra none of the men respondent got married below 15 years of age. Higher age preference for tying nuptial bond is evident in States like Tamil Nadu where 36.1 percent of men got married in 25-29 years of age followed by Maharashtra with 23.2 percent in same age group.

### **3.2.5. MEAN AGE AT MARRIAGE**

Table 6 depicts mean age at marriage for both men and women in all six states. It also shows the difference in mean age at marriage for men and women and simultaneously also shows deviation from legal age at marriage for all six states. Mean age at marriage for men varies from lowest in Rajasthan (19.7 years) where as it is highest (23.3 years) in Tamil Nadu. Similarly, mean age at marriage among women is lowest in Bihar (15.5 years) while it is highest in Tamil Nadu (18.4 years). Differences in mean age at marriage between men and women is highest in Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu (4.9 years in both the states), followed by Andhra Pradesh (4.8 years), and Bihar (4.2 years), while it is lowest in Rajasthan (2.5 years). Mean years of difference below legal age at marriage for boys ranges from lowest 0.6 years in Andhra Pradesh to highest 1.5 years in Rajasthan. But it is 2.3 years above legal age at marriage in case of Tamil Nadu. However the deviation below legal age at marriage for girls ranges 0.8 years in Maharashtra to highest 2.5 years in Bihar.

### **3.2.6. AGREEMENT BETWEEN PREFERRED AGE AT MARRIAGE AND ACTUAL AGE AT MARRIAGE**

In order to understand the agreement between preferred age at marriage and actual age at marriage Kappa index is used. The value of index varies from -1 to +1. Closer the value to -1 denotes poor agreement

while closer the value toward +1 denoted perfect agreement between observed and expected outcome. Result shows that only in state of Maharashtra, 30-35 percent agreement is found for both men and women, while in other states, agreement is poor.

### **3.2.7. DETERMINANTS OF SPOUSAL INTERACTION BEFORE MARRIAGE**

Table 7 presents results of binary logistic regression analysis showing the odds of having higher interaction with spouse (knowledge about spouse) before marriage. Question were asked to respondent that, *how well did you know your wife and husband before marriage*, their responses are, *don't know, know somewhat, know very well, meet on wedding day*. In order to apply logistic regression, we have made it in dichotomous form, i.e. don't know=0 and know=1. Results are presented in three models. Model 1 shows combined results for both men and women and model 2 and 3 shows separate results for men and women respondents respectively. Results from Model 1 show that men and women respondents living in non-nuclear family are significantly less likely to interact with their counterparts prior to their marriage. As compared to General caste respondents, those belonging to SCs and STs are more likely to interact with their spouse before marriage. In case of religion, except Muslims, respondents from other religious groups are 28 percent more likely to interact with spouse before marriage as compared to Hindu. Apparently respondents from rural areas are 0.73 times less likely to have interaction prior to their marriage. Levels of education and mother's education have significant positive influence with spousal interaction before marriage. With increase in respondent's mother's education odds of likelihood for spousal interaction also increases and it goes up to 2.2 times more for those respondent whose mothers have 12 or more years of schooling as compared to respondent whose mother have no education. With increase in respondent's wealth quintile the likelihood of spousal communication prior to marriage also increases. However child-parent interaction on personal problem does not have any significant association with spousal communication prior to marriage. Model 2 shows the odds of spousal interaction prior to marriage for men respondents. It represents analogy with Model 1. However unlike Model 1, level of education does not have an association with spousal interaction prior to marriage for men. Increasing age at marriage has significant positive association with spousal interaction before marriage. Men, who got married either at an age of 21 years or above, are 77 percent more likely to interact with their spouse as compared to those men who married below 21 years of age. Similar findings are evident in Model 3 which shows the odds of spousal interaction for women prior to their marriage. However in religious categories, only Christian women are 79 percent more likely to interact with their spouse prior to their marriage as against Hindu women. Unlikely model 1, women from other religious groups does not exhibit any significant association with spousal interaction prior to their marriage. Again as compared to illiterate women only those women who had schooling of 12 years and more are 2.23 times more likely to interact with their spouses before marriage. Working status of women has also significant association with spousal interaction prior to marriage. As against working women, non-working women are 16 percent less likely to interact with their spouses prior to their marriage.

## **IV. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

Though evidences are sparse from India or other setting that whether married youth who have selected their own spouse have more equitable marital relation than those whose spouse was selected by parents and others. As far as marriage practice is concerned in these states, results from the analysis reveals that, wide regional disparity is consistent related to role of youth in their marriage related process across India. Arrange marriage is most favored form of marriage in all the states. However some independence in the choice of groom or bride is observed in Tamil Nadu. Largely youth in less developed states (Bihar, Jharkhand and Rajasthan) are not aware about their would-be spouse before marriage, which is not the case for southern states (Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu). In contrast to the north, states in south are characterized by endogamy (marriage between close relative and notably cross cousin), isogamy (status equity between the bride's family and the groom's family). So in this aspect probably, the chance of knowing spouse before marriage is high in southern states as compare to northern states (Rajasthan, Bihar and Jharkhand). In the settings where marriages are typically arranged, self-selection of spouse has implications in terms of young people's obligations to their families and the kind of financial and social support they can expect from their parents [15].

Traditionally marriages especially for women occur early in developing country though, Legislation mandating minimum age at marriage has been passed in various forms over the past decades, but such laws have little effect on actual marriage practices. Average age at marriage in India was 14.7 years according to Census of 1991[16]. However, our finding confirms that there is a decline in very early marriages (before age 14) among young women in all the selected states but still in this regard, regional diversity is observed. Mean age at marriage for women is below the legal age in five states except Tamil Nadu. Even for males it is below the legal age at marriage in three northern states i.e. Rajasthan, Bihar and Jharkhand. Moreover, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu marriages are organized beyond the legal age at marriage for men, and this remains consistent for women also.

The practice of dowry in India has an extensive history beginning in approximately the 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century AD [17]. Its origin can be traced to the Hindu succession laws as they stood prior to the Hindu laws reforms of the 1950. Under the Hindu law of the *Mitakshra* system, a female was not entitled to have a share in parental wealth, while a male has a right to share parental wealth since his birth. Marriage is typically arranged and the practice of dowry is common in most part of the country. Finding underscore that, Dowry is a universal phenomenon in all states and interestingly men in southern states (Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu) are having significantly higher chances of receiving dowry in comparison to northern states. Dowry is not only restricted to Hindus only, even Muslim women are having more chances of giving dowry. It should be stressed upon here that dowry increases with increase in education and economic standard.

Men are excited about marriage while for female; marriage is a reason to worry. It could be due to the change in environment for females after marriage. In larger part of North India, Hindu bride goes to live with strangers (husband and his family) in a home which she has never visited and her natal family is often geographically at a distant place, and her ties with her consanguine kin undergo shrinking to varying degrees. This could be one of the probable reasons for her being worried for her at marriage time.

The chances of knowing spouse before marriage is significantly more, if the age at marriage is above the legal age. Better economic household condition and mother education, youth education specially married women appeared as significant and positive determinants on interaction with spouse before marriage. Youth belongs to the SC/ST, and Christian religion is also having interaction with their spouse before marriage. Men and women living in non-nuclear family and in rural areas are less likely to interact with their spouse before marriage.

Although involving young boys and girls in their spouse selection has gained more acceptances, research has yet to be fully established the casual link between their autonomy in marriage related decision making and its impact on later marital life which could enhance gender related equitable relationship and ultimately marital satisfaction.

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**Table 1: Socio economic profile of married men and women by their background characteristics. Youth 2006-07**

Background characteristics	Rajasthan		Bihar		Jharkhand		Maharashtra		Andhra Pradesh		Tamil Nadu	
	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW
Age of respondents												
<b>15-19</b>	10.5	29.7	7.80	43.0	5.20	36.9	1.80	23.9	1.20	30.7	0.20	15.8
<b>20-24</b>	36.2	70.3	34.6	57.0	37.4	63.1	29.4	76.1	29.2	69.3	18.6	84.2
<b>25-29</b>	53.3	NA	57.6	NA	57.5	NA	68.8	NA	69.6	NA	81.0	NA
Place of residence												
<b>Urban</b>	18.2	16.3	6.80	6.30	15.8	14.6	43.1	36.3	21.3	21.1	44.5	43.3
<b>Rural</b>	81.8	83.7	93.2	93.7	84.2	85.4	56.9	63.7	78.7	78.9	55.5	56.7
Wealth quintile												
<b>First</b>	9.2	13.3	34.5	46.7	34.2	38.1	18.6	13.6	5.10	8.20	6.90	5.10
<b>Second</b>	16.1	20.2	30.6	28.8	29.8	25.8	14.3	13.4	16.2	20.3	16.7	16.8
<b>Third</b>	18.1	20.5	16.9	12.3	17.3	19.2	20.8	22.3	28.3	28.9	29.5	25.6
<b>Fourth</b>	27.2	22.9	10.9	6.80	10.3	9.20	25.2	27.6	32.9	27.7	25.9	29.4
<b>Fifth</b>	29.4	23.2	7.00	5.40	8.50	7.70	21.1	23.1	17.4	14.8	20.8	23.1
Religion												
<b>Hindu</b>	93.9	88.0	87.9	88.5	71.2	75.0	82.0	80.4	86.5	84.7	90.4	89.0
<b>Muslim</b>	5.70	10.1	12.1	11.5	16.1	12.4	11.3	10.2	7.40	6.30	5.60	7.60
<b>Christian</b>	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.50	1.40	0.40	0.90	6.20	8.90	3.60	3.40
<b>Others</b>	1.00	1.80	0.00	0.00	11.3	11.2	6.40	8.50	0.00	0.20	0.40	0.10
Caste												
<b>SC</b>	22.2	21.8	26.9	24.8	15.3	16.2	17.6	15.9	24.4	21.5	24.6	27.2
<b>ST/VJNT</b>	16.1	10.5	3.20	0.10	28.9	23.0	18.7	12.2	8.20	7.10	2.60	0.70
<b>OBC</b>	49.3	51.5	58.9	65.6	46.6	53.2	27.6	27.5	47.1	50.6	72.1	70.6
<b>General</b>	12.3	16.1	10.8	9.50	9.20	7.50	33.8	40.3	20.3	20.8	0.70	1.50
<b>DK/No caste</b>	0.10	0.10	0.20	0.00	0.00	0.10	2.40	4.10	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.10
Education												
<b>Non literate/No formal Schooling</b>	17.1	51.6	29.5	64.0	26.9	52.3	10.0	14.8	21.1	9.6	5.9	9.6
<b>1-7 Years of Schooling</b>	27.6	26.3	29.0	20.5	29.1	26.1	26.6	28.9	33.0	28.2	40.6	28.2
<b>8-11 Years of Schooling</b>	35.8	16.9	30.0	12.9	33.9	18.4	43.7	42.2	31.5	45.7	38.2	45.7
<b>12 and above Yrs of schooling</b>	19.4	5.30	11.5	2.60	10.1	3.20	19.6	14.0	14.3	16.5	15.2	16.5
Type of Family												
<b>Nuclear</b>	27.2	31.5	30.4	32.2	27.8	33.7	22.2	23.9	37.4	43.2	40.8	36.7
<b>Non-Nuclear</b>	72.8	68.5	69.6	67.8	72.2	66.3	77.8	76.1	62.6	56.8	59.2	63.3

Note: MM- Married men (15-29); MW- Married women (15-24); NA- Not applicable

**Table: 2 Percent distribution of youth by age at initiation of marriage related discussion by states, 2006-07**

States	Rajasthan		Bihar		Jharkhand		Maharashtra		Andhra Pradesh		Tamil Nadu	
Age Group	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW
≤14	10.3	28	5	47	4	33	0	16	0	30	0	6
15-17	20	38	21	36	20	40	5	47	8	48	2	42
18-20	31	12	38	7	34	10	29	31	39	17	24	41
21-24	18	1	21	1	23	1	45	3	40	2	37	8
25-29	3	NA	3	NA	5	NA	17	NA	10	NA	26	NA
Others	19	21	13	8	13	16	4	4	3	4	12	4

Note: MM- Married men; MW- Married women

**Table 3: Distribution of married men and women who reported receiving or giving dowry by background characteristics**

Background Characteristics	MM (15-29)	MW(15-24)
<b>Place of residence</b>		
Urban	73.4	81.1
Rural	71.2	76.8
<b>Age of respondents</b>		
15-19	60.3	74.4
20-24	70.8	79.1
25-29	73.1	-
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	72.0	77.8
Muslim	72.1	83.0
Christian	76.1	79.8
Others	58.7	58.2
<b>Caste</b>		
SCs	68.0	71.2
STs/VJNT	57.1	63.8
OBC	75.9	80.7
General	76.0	82.8
<b>Education</b>		
None	60.6	70.9
1-7 years	70.8	80.0
8-11 years	74.4	82.9
12 and above	81.1	85.6
<b>Wealth quintile</b>		
First	53.5	61.3
Second	68.6	75.7
Third	73.6	80.6
Fourth	76.9	84.4
Fifth	84.5	89.2
<b>States</b>		
Rajasthan	77.6	85.4
Bihar	67.7	68.3
Jharkhand	67.5	70.4
Maharashtra	58.0	69.9
Andhra Pradesh	80.8	86.3
Tamil Nadu	83.9	87.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>72.0</b>	<b>78.0</b>



N	8052	13912
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Note: MM- Married men; MW- Married women

**Table 4: Percent distribution of participation of married men and women by choice of marriage and degree of acquaintance with Spouse, 2006-07**

Marriage Indicators	Rajasthan		Bihar		Jharkhand		Maharashtra		Andhra Pradesh		Tamil Nadu	
	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW
<b>Type of Marriage</b>												
Arrange	99.5	99.5	99.0	98.9	95.2	92.2	94.9	95.1	95.3	93.1	80.0	80.9
Love	0.5	0.5	1.0	1.1	4.8	7.8	5.1	4.9	4.7	6.9	20.0	19.1
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>1886</b>	<b>2603</b>	<b>1109</b>	<b>2340</b>	<b>1259</b>	<b>2683</b>	<b>1061</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1398</b>	<b>2328</b>	<b>1321</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Interaction with spouse before marriage</b>												
Don't know meet on wedding day	86.1	86.0	90.6	94.1	79.0	80.7	51.5	62.4	43.5	44.4	21.1	35.5
Knew some what	11.7	11.0	6.7	3.9	14.2	11.1	35.4	23.9	32.9	29.5	40.6	32.7
Knew very well	2.2	3.1	2.7	2.0	6.8	8.2	13.0	13.7	23.6	26.1	38.3	31.8
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>1871</b>	<b>2418</b>	<b>1115</b>	<b>2341</b>	<b>1258</b>	<b>2684</b>	<b>1058</b>	<b>1942</b>	<b>1396</b>	<b>2329</b>	<b>1322</b>	<b>1999</b>
<b>Respondent feeling about getting married</b>												
Excited	61.4	20.3	48.7	9.0	54.7	17.7	70.3	31.9	51.8	17.2	76.6	31.0
Nothing special	31.2	24.9	38.0	17.3	28.5	14.6	23.0	25.2	39.8	24.8	17.2	15.0
Anxious	3.0	11.5	5.4	16.8	7.4	16.2	2.0	7.5	1.0	3.6	2.4	10.7
Scared/ Unhappy	4.3	43.3	7.9	56.9	9.4	51.5	4.6	35.3	7.4	54.4	3.9	43.3
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>1869</b>	<b>2396</b>	<b>1113</b>	<b>2341</b>	<b>1256</b>	<b>2682</b>	<b>1062</b>	<b>1942</b>	<b>1402</b>	<b>2325</b>	<b>1320</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>Respondent had someone in mind to marry</b>												
Yes	2.6	4.0	10.4	3.1	13.4	11.9	17.0	9.1	16.4	11.4	33.1	24.0
No	97.5	88.2	89.6	96.9	86.6	88.1	83.0	90.9	83.6	88.6	66.9	76.0
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>1871</b>	<b>2418</b>	<b>1115</b>	<b>2341</b>	<b>1258</b>	<b>2684</b>	<b>1065</b>	<b>1947</b>	<b>1405</b>	<b>2330</b>	<b>1321</b>	<b>2005</b>
<b>Informed to parent about girl/ boy</b>												
Yes	25.0	20.0	20.0	47.0	45.2	61.3	52.4	60.3	64.6	72.4	73.8	73.5
No	75.0	80.0	80.0	53.0	54.8	38.7	47.6	39.7	35.4	27.6	26.2	26.5
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>482</b>
<b>Parents Response for girl/boys chosen by Respondent</b>												
Agreed	50.0	40.0	36.5	54.3	60.6	68.1	55.6	53.9	39.9	63.9	52.8	56.5
Disagreed	40.0	60.0	55.3	45.7	33.3	29.0	38.4	42.1	53.0	35.2	44.2	42.1
No reaction	10.0	0.0	8.2	0.0	6.1	2.9	6.0	3.9	7.1	0.8	3.0	1.4
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>354</b>

Note: MM- Married male MW- Married women, unweighted number of respondent

**Table 5 Percentage distribution of Age at marriage of men and women by states. 2006-07**

Age at Marriage	Rajasthan		Bihar		Jharkhand		Maharashtra		Andhra Pradesh		Tamil Nadu	
	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW	MM	MW
Less than 15	7.7	11.6	3.7	32.6	3.0	25.4	0.4	11.9	0.0	14.2	0.0	3.7
15-19	41.2	75.0	42.1	62.5	38.2	67.2	18.3	72.2	21.0	74.9	8.2	62.7
20-24	44.4	13.4	47.9	4.9	48.0	7.4	58.2	15.9	63.7	10.9	55.1	33.6
25-29	6.7	NA	6.3	NA	10.8	NA	23.2	NA	15.3	NA	36.1	NA
Total	1886	2603	1115	2341	1259	2684	1065	1947	1405	2330	1322	2007

Note: MM- Married men MW- Married women, unweighted respondents from each states

**Table 6: Mean age at marriage for men and women. 2006-07**

States	MM	MW	Gap in years MM-MW	Years above/ below legal age	
				Men	Women
Rajasthan	19.5	17.0	2.5	-1.5	-1.0
Bihar	19.7	15.5	4.2	-1.3	-2.5
Jharkhand	20.0	16.1	3.9	-1.0	-1.9
Maharashtra	22.1	17.2	4.9	1.1	-0.8
Andhra Pradesh	21.6	16.8	4.8	0.6	-1.2
Tamil Nadu	23.3	18.4	4.9	2.3	0.4

Note: MM- Married men; MW- Married women

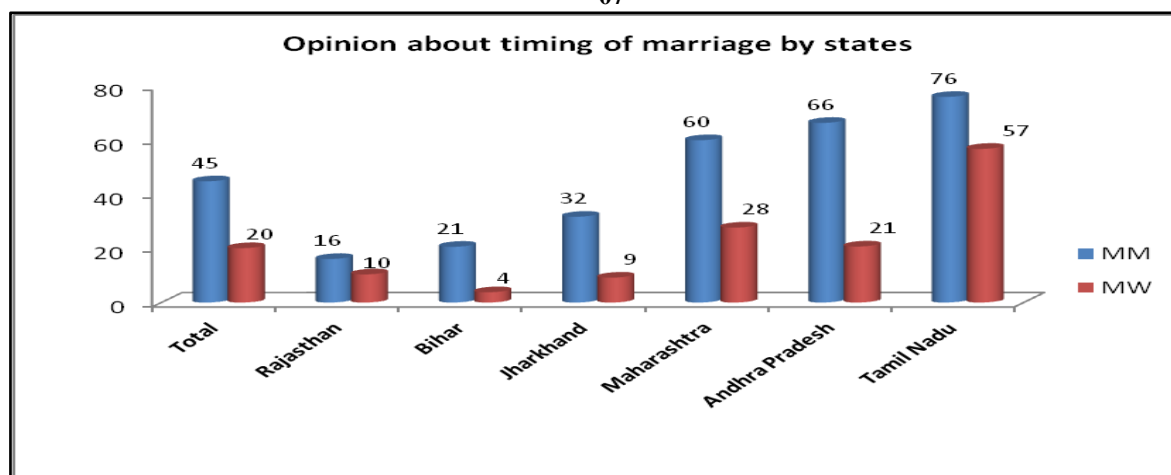
**Table 7: Odds ratio from Logistic regression showing interaction with spouse before marriage, Youth, 2006-07**

Variables	Model 1 <sup>(1)</sup>		Model 1 <sup>(2)</sup>		Model 1 <sup>(3)</sup>	
	Odds Ratio	CI	Odds Ratio	CI	Odds Ratio	CI
Family Type						
Nuclear ®						
Non-Nuclear	0.70***	(0.65-0.75)	0.66***	(0.59-0.74)	0.76***	(0.68-0.84)
Caste						
General ®						
Schedule Caste (SC)	1.23***	(1.10-1.37)	1.19**	(1.00-1.41)	1.41***	(1.22-1.64)
Schedule Tribe (ST)/ VJNT	1.41***	(1.23-1.63)	1.50***	(1.22-1.84)	1.41**	(1.15-1.73)
Other Backward Classes	1.07	(0.98-1.16)	1.05	(0.91-1.21)	1.13**	(1.01-1.27)
Religion						
Hindu ®						
Muslim	0.82***	(0.73-0.93)	0.78***	(0.64-0.94)	0.94	(0.80-1.10)
Christian	2.08***	1.69-2.56)	2.12***	(1.47-3.06)	1.79***	(1.38-2.33)
Others	1.28**	(1.06-1.54)	1.83***	(1.33-2.51)	1.07	(0.84-1.35)
Place of Residence						
Urban ®						
Rural	0.73***	(0.68-0.79)	0.75***	(0.67-0.85)	0.73***	(0.66-0.82)
Level of Education ©	1.03***	(1.02-1.04)	1.00	(0.99-1.02)	1.07***	(1.06-1.09)
Mothers Education						
No Education ®						
1-7 Years	1.25***	(1.14-1.37)	1.44***	(1.44-1.94)	1.04	(0.93-1.17)
8-11 Years	1.19**	(1.03-1.38)	1.45***	(1.17-1.80)	1.13	(0.94-1.35)
12 and above	2.23***	(1.53-3.26)	2.53***	(1.48-4.33)	2.23***	(1.37-3.60)
Age at Marriage for MM						
<21 Years ®						
21- and above			1.77***	(1.58-1.99)		

Age at Marriage for MW						
<b>&lt;18 Years</b> <sup>®</sup>						
<b>18- and above</b>						
Age at marriage <sup>©</sup>	1.06***	(1.05-1.07)			1.25***	(1.11-1.40)
Marriage Duration <sup>©</sup>	0.98*	(0.97-1.00)	0.97**	(0.95-0.99)	1.00	(0.98-1.02)
Wealth quintile						
<b>First</b> <sup>®</sup>						
<b>Second</b>	1.28***	(1.13-1.45)	1.00	(0.83-1.20)	1.58***	(1.33-1.88)
<b>Third</b>	1.96**	(1.74-2.21)	1.64***	(1.37-1.95)	2.25***	(1.90-2.65)
<b>Fourth</b>	1.93***	(1.70-2.19)	1.70***	1.42-2.05)	2.11***	(1.78-2.51)
<b>Fifth</b>	1.70***	(1.48-1.95)	1.42***	(1.15-1.75)	1.91***	(1.58-2.31)
Work Status						
<b>Working</b> <sup>®</sup>						
<b>Non-Working</b>					0.84***	(0.76-0.93)
Child Parents Interaction on personal problems						
<b>Interaction with Others</b> <sup>®</sup>						
<b>Mother or Father only</b>	1.05	1.01	0.95	(0.85-1.05)	1.20***	(1.10-1.32)
Constant	<b>0.17</b>		<b>0.57</b>		<b>0.57</b>	
N	<b>15412</b>		<b>6608</b>		<b>8804</b>	

Note: (1) Combined, (2) Married Men, (3) Married Women; <sup>(C)</sup> Continuous variables; <sup>(R)</sup> Reference Categories Interaction with spouse before Marriage: 0= don't know; 1= know; CI-Confidence Intervals Level of significance: \*\*\*p<0.01; \*\*p<0.05; \*p<0.1

Figure 1: Percentage of Youth whose parents sought opinion about timing of marriage by states, 2006-07



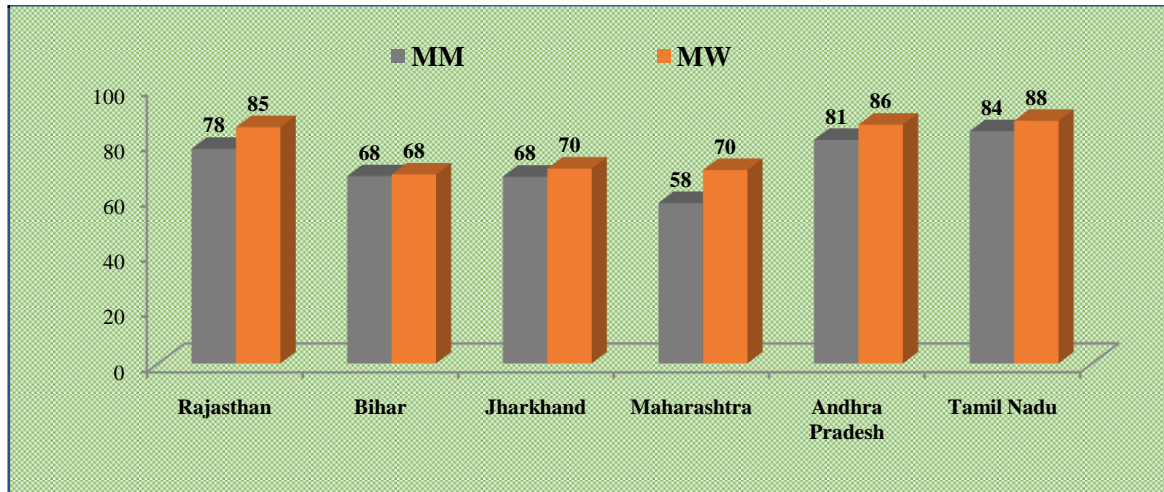


Figure 2: Practice of dowry among married men and women by states

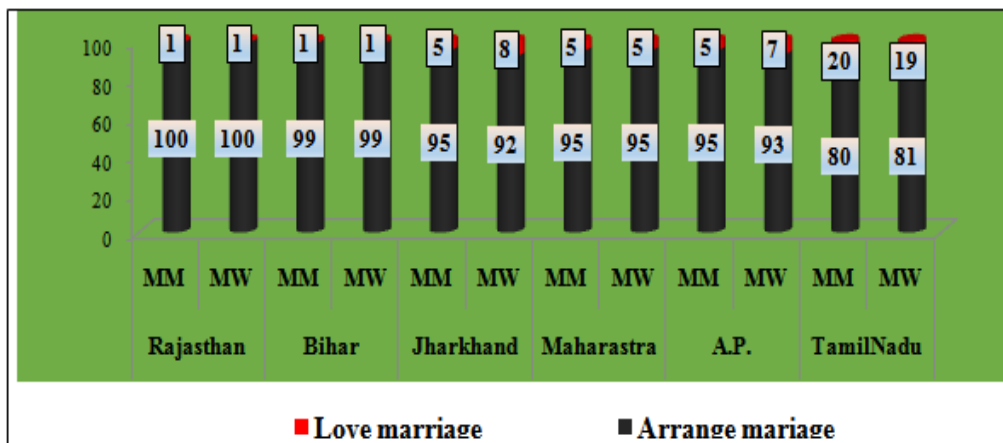


Figure 3: Type of marriage among men and women in selected states

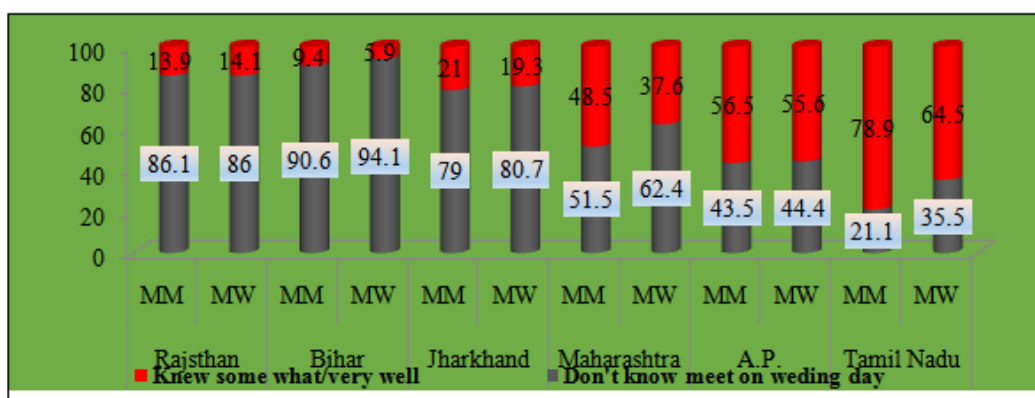


Figure 4: Interaction with Spouse before marriage in selected states

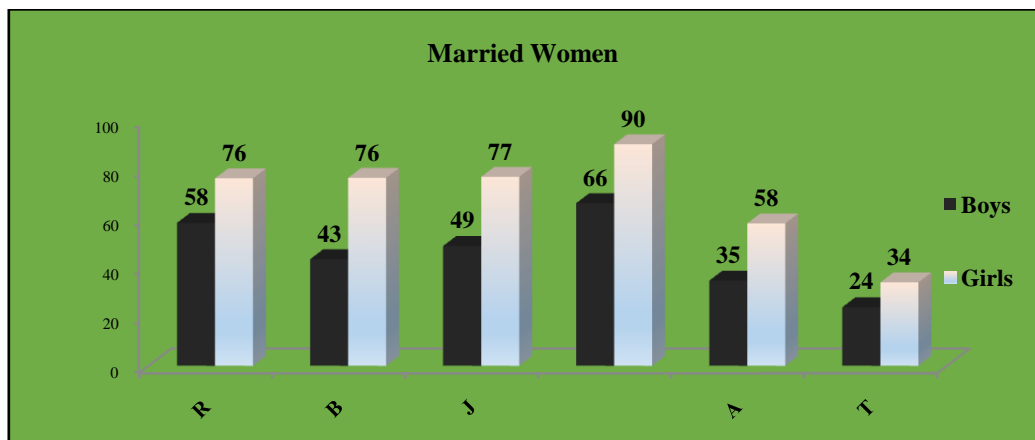
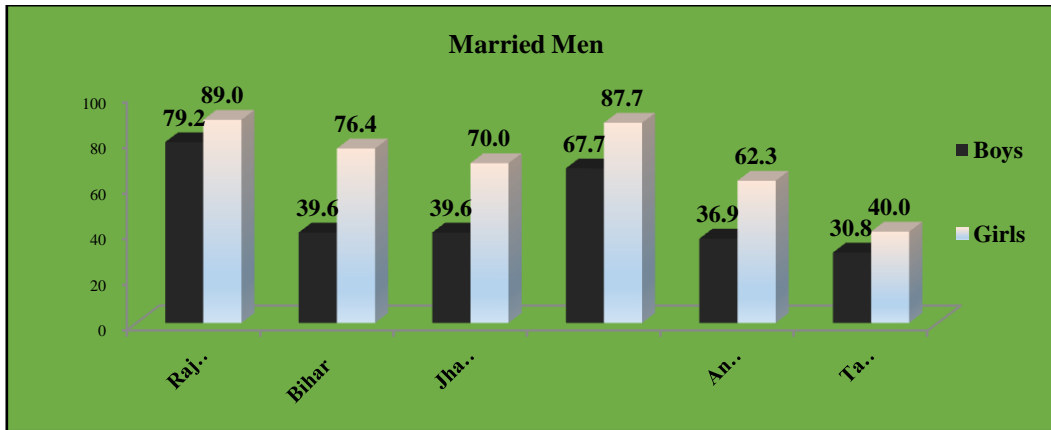


Figure 5: Awareness about legal age at marriage among men and women in selected states